

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 SOFIA 00865 111546Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CA-01 /020 W
-----071407 120222Z /73

R 111430Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO AMVONSUL ISTANBUL 247
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4547
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS SOFIA 0865

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (FRANBEN, MICHAEL D. AND GONELLA, ANN E.)
IWUBJECT; W/W ASSISTANCE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

REF: ISTANBUL 1430

1. BASED ON LIMITED INFORMATION PROVIDED REFTEL EMBASSY
UNABLE TO OFFER EXPLANATION AS TO WHY FRANZEN AND
GONELLA WERE REQUIRED TO PAY ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR
TRAIN FARE AND VISA. EMBASSY HAS NEVER ENCOUNTERED A
CASE WHERE A US CITIZEN HAS BEEN CHARGED FOR A VISA
UPON EXITING BULGARIA. EMBASSY CHECKED ON TRAIN FARES
FOR INDICATED ROUTE BUT IN NO INSTANCE WAS QUOTED A PRICE
OF EIGHTEEN DOLLARS FOR INDIVIDUAL FARE FOR THE WHOLE,
OR ANY PART, OF TRIP FROM SOFIA TO ISTANBUL. THOUGH
GOB VISA REQUIREMENTS ARE OFTEN INCONSISTENTLY APPLIED,
EMBASSY NOTES THAT, GENERALLY, US CITIZENS NOT IN

POSSESSION OF A VALID BULGARIAN VISA (IF ADMITTED INTO
THE COUNTRY AS AN EXCEPTION) ARE CHARGED SEVENTEEN
DOLLARS FOR A VISA WHEN ENTERING BULGARIA BY
LAND AT BORDER CROSSING POINT.

2. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE MORE DETAILS FROM
FRANZEN AND GONELLA. PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ARE
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THEIR ITINERARY WHILE IN BULGARIA (DATES OF ARRIVAL
AND DEPARTURE, MODE OF TRAVEL ETC.) AND WHETHER THEY
APPLIED FOR AND/OR WERE ISSUED VISAS UPON ENTRY

INCLUDING DATES AND PLACE OF APPLICATION. OTHER
CONCERNS ARE SPECIFICS ON PURCHASE OF TRAIN TICKETS
AND WHETHER A COMMUNICATION PROBLEM WITH BULGARIAN

OFFICIALS PLAYED A ROLE IN THIS INCIDENT.

GARTHOFF

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SOFIA00865
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780201-0524
Format: TEL
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780569/aaaacghh.tel
Line Count: 64
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ISTANBUL 1430
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2719219
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> VJT 20040927; <DBA REVIEWED> VJT 20041118
Subject: W/W ASSISTANCE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES
TAGS: CASC, US, BU, (FRANBEN, MICHAEL D), (GONELLA, ANN E)
To: ISTANBUL
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a6118ea0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014